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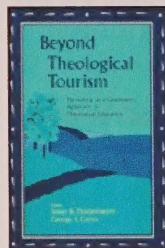
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Beyond Theological Tourism: Mentoring as a Grassroots Approach to Theological Education

Susan B. Thistelwaite [Susan B. Thistlethwaite](#) (Editor) [George F. Cairns](#) (Editor)



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Reviews and Commentary

We love reading reviews—and the more of them, the better. We didn't write the reviews below (other people did), but we thought you'd be interested in their comments.

This Book was reviewed by: [The Publisher, Peter Jackson - The Christian Century](#) and [John Frambes - MultiCultural Review](#)

From The Publisher:

Since the early days of liberation theology, Northern Hemisphere theological education has used the phrase "solidarity with the oppressed" to denote the religiously and morally appropriate response to situations of violence and oppression. Yet efforts to inculcate solidarity of heart and mind often devolve into a kind of "theological tourism" wherein professors and students visit oppressed communities without truly participating as subjects in the subjectivity of the marginalized. Beyond Theological Tourism shows how one group of theological teacher-mentors and students attempt to overcome the limits of visits as "tourists of the revolution" to exotic locations. Starting from the challenge of Robert Evans of the Plowshares Institute, a group of Chicago-based Christians struggled with new modes of education for prospective ministers.

From Peter Jackson - The Christian Century:

The editors may not have decided exactly for whom the book is intended; we get appendices with minute-by-minute schedules of conferences, plus more on the mechanics of their ventures than most people need. But there is more than enough other matter to help readers begin their own move away

bn.com

from 'theological tourism.'

From John Frambes - MultiCultural Review:

The significance of the title is that it is possible to travel the world without ever leaving home mentally. Ministerial students must be taught by the very people to whom Jesus preached: prostitutes and the hungry. The experience is meant to be unsettling and to force students to abandon assumptions and mindsets that separate them from their gospel neighbors. The microcosm reflects the world: injustice encountered on the local level mirrors global issues of injustice, and unexpected good reveals the goodness of the world. This is a thought-provoking work for those in the clergy and those who are interested in spiritual activism in the inner city and the Third World.

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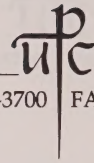


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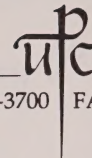
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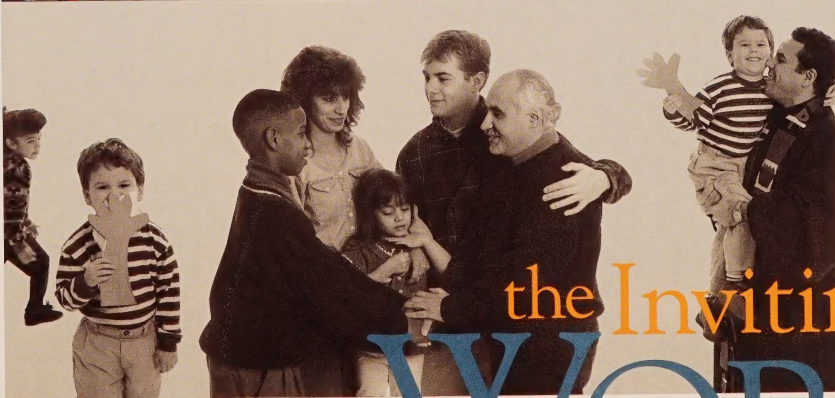
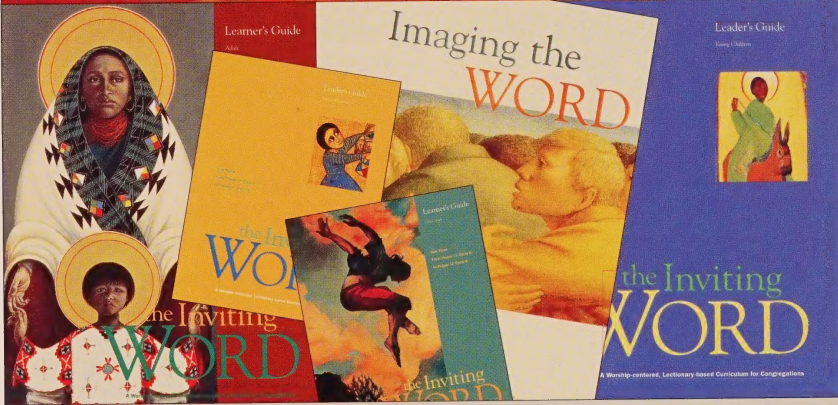
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The Word Among Us

YEAR THREE

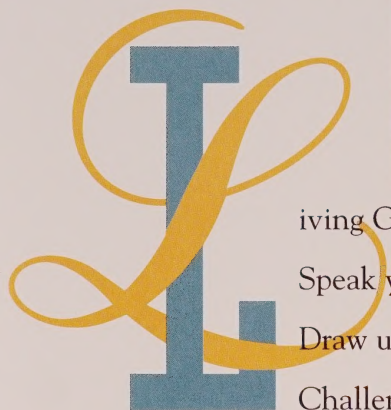
FROM PROPER 17, CYCLE A, TO PROPER 17, CYCLE B

1996-1997



the Inviting WORD

A Worship-centered, Lectionary-based Curriculum for Congregations



iving God,
Speak your inviting Word. Embrace us.
Draw us together as we seek your way in the world.
Challenged, fed, and forgiven, send us to serve
in Christ's name. Amen.

God is moving. God is beckoning congregations to gather in and around the Word. In churches—large and small—throughout the United States and Canada, children, youth, and adults are reaching out, **embracing** one another with the peace of Christ. The Bible is being proclaimed, studied, and lived. Communities are changed. ***The Inviting Word***, a comprehensive curriculum for education and worship, assists churches in making the **Word come alive** and in vitalizing their congregations.

The Inviting Word is the same innovative curriculum program developed as *Word Among Us* by the United Church of Christ. It provides a fresh approach to Christian education and worship. ***The Inviting Word*** includes weekly resources for study groups, Sunday school, worship, personal meditation, and congregational meetings based on the lectionary readings from the Bible.

A truly **ecumenical** effort, ***The Inviting Word*** was written and edited by a diverse group of experienced teachers, leaders, pastors, and artists from the United Church of Christ, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Episcopal Church, and Roman Catholic Church.

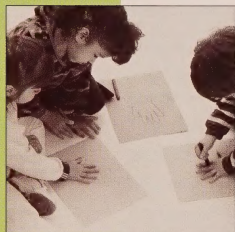
This year ***The Inviting Word*** includes more Bible study material for adults, more experiences for children and youth, more music by children and youth on the audiocassette, and more selections in the **award-winning** *Imaging the Word: An Arts and Lectionary Resource*.

Pull out the poster in this catalog and **explore** the overview. Imagine what exciting things might happen this year in the life of your entire congregation when you explore the Bible through ***The Inviting Word***. Discover the teachable, innovative, and theologically sound resources that make up this year's ***The Inviting Word***.

**For information about *The Inviting Word*,
call United Church Press at 1.800.537.3394.**

CONGREGATION ORIENTED
The Inviting Word is designed for the whole congregation. A congregation focus statement for each week invites everyone—adults, youth, and children; at church, at home, or away—to experience God's Word in compelling ways.

LECTIONARY BASED
The Inviting Word uses the 1992 edition of the *Revised Common Lectionary* as its biblical guide. One focus Bible reading from the lectionary is identified for each week. Everyone in the congregation explores the reading in worship, in groups, and at home.



BIBLICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY GROUNDED
The Inviting Word puts the Bible at the center of the congregation's life. Each age-level lesson invites learners to discover how the Word of God first moved among the people of the Bible. Then congregations and individual age groups discover how the Word of God moves among them now.

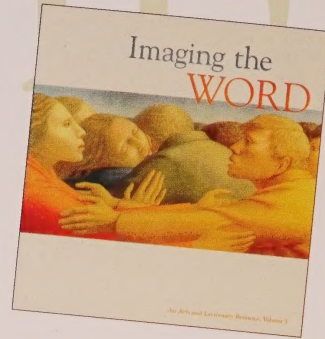
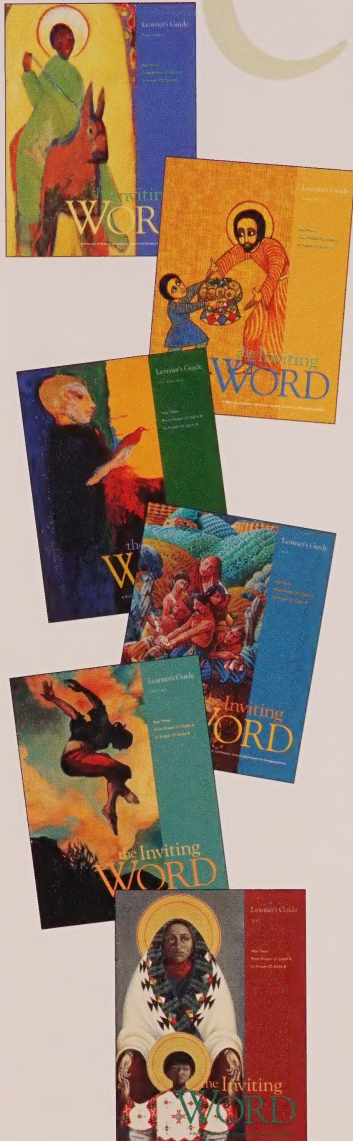
WORSHIP CENTERED
The Inviting Word recognizes that people learn when they worship and worship when they learn. *The Inviting Word* materials will assist you in planning and coordinating worship in all the educational settings in your congregation. The lessons for all age levels follow a worshipful teaching approach, a liturgy of learning.

"Rarely have I felt the urge to recommend a curriculum resource as much as I have this one. We are using it in the church we attend, where I am the lead teacher with elementary children. The resources are also considered by our liturgy committee in planning weekly worship. It has provided for a wonderful integration of the **worship** and **mission life** of the congregation."

—Charles R. Foster,
professor of religion and education,
Candler School of Theology, Emory
University, Atlanta, Georgia, and
teacher, Northwoods United Methodist
Church, Doraville, Georgia



The Inviting Word—An Overview



IMAGING THE WORD: AN ARTS AND LECTIONARY RESOURCE, VOLUME 3

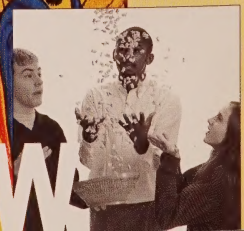
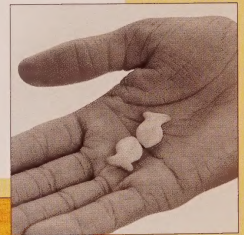
A beautiful coffee-table-size volume filled with full-color art, photos, poetry, liturgy, and commentary for selected Bible readings from the lectionary. For use in worship/sermon planning, in church school, in groups, and at home.

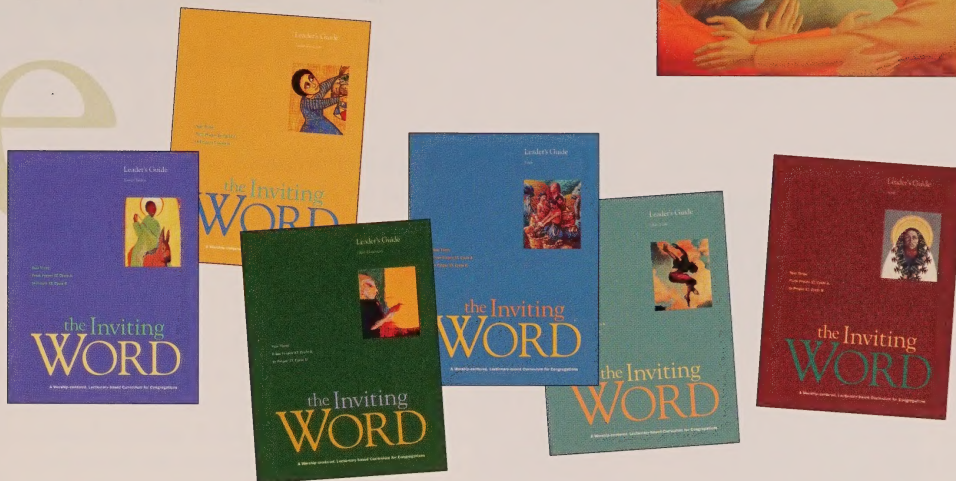
See pages 4 and 5.

THE INVITING WORD LEARNER'S GUIDES

These annual guides for young children, younger elementary children, older elementary children, youth, older youth, and adults provide a two-sided pull-out sheet for each lesson. Activities, art, music, and commentary are used to assist learners through each lesson and its "liturgy of learning."

See pages 8 and 9.





THE INVITING WORD LEADER'S GUIDES

These leader-friendly guides are issued annually for teachers of young children, younger elementary children, older elementary children, youth, older youth, and adults. Designed for church school or other age-specific groups, they provide teaching and leading skills, leader helps, Bible background, and teaching plans. They focus on the lesson plan, or "liturgy of learning," while also encouraging leaders to develop and use their own gifts in age-specific settings.

See pages 6 and 7.

"Of the several curriculums which I

have had the opportunity to use over the years, *The Inviting Word* rates at the top of my list. The way

The Inviting Word weaves the

lectionary with background

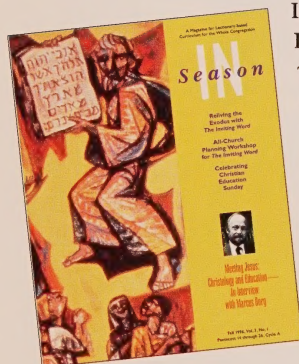
information, lesson plan, artwork,

poetry, teacher training, worship

suggestions . . . is simply **very**

well done."

—J. Thomas Gough,
pastor, First Congregational UCC,
Sheridan, Wyoming



IN SEASON: A MAGAZINE FOR LECTIONARY-BASED CURRICULUM FOR THE WHOLE CONGREGATION

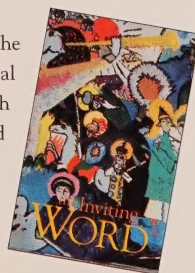
In Season, a quarterly companion to *The Inviting Word*, is a leadership development resource that offers suggestions and ideas to help guide congregations and church leaders through the lectionary. Timely and current, it contains sermon ideas, opening or closing ideas for church school, special seasonal services or events, and innovative teacher-training concepts and events.

See page 10.

THE INVITING WORD AUDIOCASSETTE

The Inviting Word audiocassette will enliven the curriculum with hymns, songs, and musical responses for the entire congregation and with age-specific settings. It includes innovative and traditional instrumental music and sound effects that can be used in general worship or learning settings, such as guided meditation, drama, and interpretive movement.

See page 11.



The Inviting Word

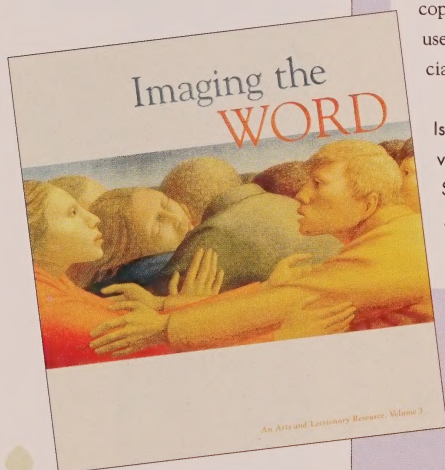


Imaging the Word An Arts and Lectionary Resource

ins

"It is wonderful to have such artwork available to **inspire** and illustrate. Many of our congregations have purchased a copy of *Imaging the Word* for personal use at **home** and the **teachers** love to have it in their classrooms."

—Patricia Ross,
associate pastor, First Congregational
UCC, Portland, Oregon



Imaging the Word is a beautifully designed, full-color, 10" x 10 1/2" coffee-table-size book full of nearly 300 pages of some of the world's finest art. Imaginatively blended with the lectionary readings, the contents have been chosen for multigenerational and multicultural appeal.

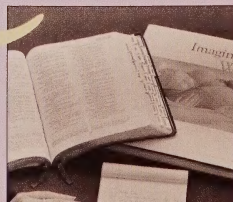
Imaging the Word provides a wide range of traditional and contemporary images and texts that assist in the understanding of Bible Scripture. Available in either hardcover or paperback, it includes stories, photography, music, drama, portions of scripts, liturgies, and Bible commentary to accompany the stunning artwork. There are entries for each Sunday of the year, plus special occasions. Many entries are in large print.

No other curriculum provides a book for individuals, families, groups, church school, and congregations! *Imaging the Word* can be used in age-group settings along with the curriculum—but it will also be inspirational and stimulating as a stand-alone item for other church groups and for individuals in private study and devotion, home family use, and for those planning worship. Order copies for Christian education classes, worship leaders, home use, and as the perfect gift! Available with the curriculum at special prices or in your local bookstore.

Issued annually, volume 1 is for 1994-1995;
volume 2 is for 1995-1996; and volume 3 is for 1996-1997.
\$39.95 (hardcover); \$29.95 (paperback)
Also available as a 3-volume set
\$99.95 (hardcover); \$74.95 (paperback)

inspire

Imaging the Word



Easter 4

LET US LOVE

We know love by this, that Jesus laid down life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3:16–18

The meaning of the cross, of redemptive suffering, also appears in a different light for those who suffer and are killed as part of the struggle for justice. Too often Christians have treated the suffering Christ as some kind of cosmic legal transaction with God to pay for the sins of humanity, as though anyone's sufferings and death could actually "pay for" other sin! Christ's cross is used to illustrate a sense of unmitigated guilt, unworthiness and penitence in Christians. . . .

(That) to accept and endure will be regarded as redemptive. . . . Solidarity with the poor and with those who suffer does not mean justifying those evils, but struggling to overcome them. As one struggles against evil, one also risks suffering and becomes vulnerable to retaliation and violence to those who are intent on keeping the present system intact. . . . But risking suffering and even death on behalf of a new society, we also awaken hope.

Rosemary Radford Ruether



Diego Rivera, *The Flower Carrier*. The famous Mexican painter Diego Rivera strongly combines backbreaking toil of workers with colorful and fugacious beauty.

For the People

If I were a bird
and able to fly after,
I would like to be a white dove
to guide the people to freedom.

If I were a grain of sand,
I would throw myself down
to make a path for the people.

If I were the cloud in the sky,
I would shelter and bring rain
to the rice field.

I would sacrifice my life
for the suffering people.
I would sacrifice my self
no matter how many times
I would have to die.

Anna May Say Pe, Burma Institute of Theology



Michael Tracy, *Cruz: La Pasión*

Michael Tracy's work combines ritual and art, suffering and sacrifice, each generating life. On Good Friday 1991, Tracy burned his two feet high processional cross in the Rio Grande.

I have often been threatened with death. Nevertheless, as a Christian, I do not believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I shall arise in the Salvadoran people. I say so without meaning to boast, with the greatest humility. Martyrdom is grace of God that I do not believe I deserve. But if God accepts the sacrifice of my life, let my blood be a seed of freedom and the sign that hope will soon be reality. Let my death, if it is accepted by God, be for the liberation of my people and as a witness of hope in the future.

You may say, if they succeed in killing me, that I pardon and bless those who do it. Would that truly they might be convinced that they will waste their time. A heaven will die, but the church of God, which is the people, will never perish.

Archbishop Oscar Romero



Jack and Guy
Went out in the
And they found a little boy
With one black eye.

Come says Jack let's knock him
On the head

No says Guy

Let's buy him some bread

You buy one loaf

And I'll buy two

And we'll bring him up

As other folk do.

Traditional rhyme from Mother Goose, reinterpreted by Maurice Sendak

Maurice Sendak, *We Are All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy*. Maurice Sendak, a popular writer and illustrator of children's books, has taken a part of Mother Goose rhyme and turned them into a parable of modern responsibility in the face of homelessness. Under a moon that ethically expresses hope for moral action, the homeless children Jack and Guy encounter a child even poorer than they in "the dumps. . . [where] the houses are built without walls." They choose their response: not violence, but sharing of their meager resources, and bring him "home."

We gather to worship, O God,
under the shadow of the cross,
sign of human shame and divine wisdom.

Like Jesus, we would follow faithfully in your way:
the Jesus, we would love to you and die to you.

We are your people,
we belong to you.

We offer you our worship and our lives,
May your name be glorified in your church
as we are open to your presence today:
through Jesus Christ,
Amen.

United Church of Christ Book of Worship



Imaging the Word

The Inviting Word—Leader's Guides

At the top of the first page is the Sunday name and number, followed by two years' dates.

A Bible verse appears in color print. This is the key portion of the focus scripture from the day's lectionary readings on which a focus experience for all ages is based.

"Leader Preparation and Background" contains three parts. "The Word and You" gives leaders a devotional introduction to the focus scripture.

Supplies are listed in a shaded box.

Easter 4
April 20, 1997/May 14, 2000

LET US LOVE



Maurice Sendak, *In the Dumps*, as reprinted in *We for All: The Dumps with Jack and Gray* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993). © 1993 by Maurice Sendak. Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

We know love by this, that Jesus laid down life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3:16-18

Congregational Focus Experience

To experience the gift of Jesus' sacrificial love, which calls us to express God's love to others.

Younger Elementary Children Focus Experience

To show God's love to others because Jesus loves us so much.

Focus Scriptures: 1 John 3:16-24

Additional Scriptures: Acts 4:5-12
Psalm 2
John 10:11-18

Discovering the Word—Leader Preparation and Background

The Word and You

To begin your preparation, skim "The Background Word" then continue here. Recall some instances in which love was expressed by others to you or by you to others. What did that love look like and how did you know it was love? How did it help you or the other person?

We don't always understand sacrificial love. Sacrificial love is a love that gives in behalf of others—sometimes at great costs. It is a love that is freely given out of healthy care and genuine concern, not out of guilt, manipulation, or fear. Sacrificial love serves to strengthen the bonds of community.

The early church tried to help others because they were so glad for what Jesus had done for them. They shared their goods with one another. They especially tried to provide help for those who had no family to support them. The first Christians did this because Jesus had laid down his life for them.

The Christian belief we have taught you is that Jesus loved and died for us so that all people could have a redemptive relationship with God and with one another. Look closely at "The Background Word" to discover how the early church understood this sacrificial love. How does Jesus' loving action affect you today?

The Background Word

Perhaps no English word is more popular than the word "love," and it is a major theme in our Christian vocabulary as well. One of the most familiar biblical texts is "For God so loved the world" (John 3:16). But when the people are of the word often associate it with sentiment or feeling among persons, the biblical text again insists on active will that seeks the good of others. It is not just a warm feeling; it is a conscious action. God's love for the world is God's work for the good of all.

The First Epistle of John is a letter that bears some connection to the vocabulary and community of the Gospel of John. It was probably written later by another author around the turn of the first century, partly to confirm views that would have otherwise caused the very heart of God's love in John.

This is why John John called to readers to "test the spirit" to see whether they are from God" (4:1). The issue was whether persons had confessed "that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (4:2) and also John 1:14). Some held that Jesus only seemed to be human and really did not share in fully human life and death. Such views undercut the incarnation of God's love in Jesus.

First John 3:16-24 speaks of God's love in Jesus in terms of his laying down his life for us, and so we sought to lay down our lives for one another. God's love, manifested through the death of Jesus, connects with human experience—both, life, death, and life—so that the relationship with God and with others comes. God's love broke the barrier of sin to bring the gift of eternal life—a new quality of life in the present.

If that love of God is at work in people, it calls for concrete action. "How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love not in word or speech, but in truth and action" (1 John 3:17-18).

First John has two basic parts: the Spirit. The one, as shown above, was to confirm that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (the incarnation or embodiment of God's love). The other is to love one another and attain (see 3:16-17, 11:12, 19-21).

There can be no valid love for God without love for brothers and sisters (3:12). To do this is to abide in God and let God's Spirit abide in us (3:24).

In the middle of 1 John 3:16-24 is another wonderful note. It has to do with the need for resources in the midst of a more self-directed and self-consciousness (see 19-22). People can be measured, for "whenever our hearts condemn us . . . God is greater than our hearts." God is greater than how people feel. God's love overcomes self-consciousness, opens us to ask God for help, and leads to boldness in hearing God's command to love one another.

The Word and Younger Elementary Children

In today's materialistic world, children usually have the word love referring only to comfort or sympathy. This lesson provides an opportunity to show other examples of love. How might the children experience receiving and giving love in their lives?

Since not all children live in a family that is able to give meaningful love, a family cannot be the only example of such love provided for the group.

Currently, Jesus is the clearest example of self-giving love for the children. Jesus not only gave of himself but intervened in others' lives in order to help. He saw it that people had lived. He stepped in to help them when they were struggling. He helped people who others did not approve. Jesus came down and put himself in danger, if that were necessary, to help others. Jesus came down and came about us now.

That is the kind of love we want the children to know about.

What can the children of your congregation do to participate in Christ's love? Talk with your pastor, educator, or ministry committee chairpersons in light of ways your group can give of themselves to others. In what ways can children understand a sacrificial love that gives and gives, but keeps them safe from harm. As children practice these actions, they will begin to understand why this kind of love is primary in the Christian life.

"The Background Word" is a commentary on the focus scripture written by biblical scholars. Discover how God's Word first moved among the people of the Bible. The background is an ideal study piece for leaders' and teachers' meetings.

"The Word and Your Age Level" considers the particular experience that each age group may have with the Scripture.

The Liturgy of Learning for Younger Elementary Children

You will need:

Low table, white cloth, Bible, and offering basket
Leader's guide for Easter 4 for each child
Construction paper, paper grocery bag for each child, drawing paper, scissors, crayons or markers, masking tape, stapler, and staples

Scripture, napkins, juice or water, cups, and loaf of crumbless bread or roll if possible, imagine the Word: An Arts and Lectures Resource, volume 3, The Inviting Word: Hear Three cassette, and cassette player

For Additional Experiences
Information about two or three hearing options and description to send to families
Crayons and 4' length of mural paper

Gathering for the Word

1 Prepare the space.

Low table, white cloth, Bible, offering basket, construction paper, markers, masking tape, and leader's guide

2 Welcome the children.

Worship table supplies and, if possible, the year three cassette and cassette player

3 Play a snack-time game.

Snacks, napkins, juice or water, and cups

Place as large letters on a construction paper sign: LET US LOVE. Around or near the sign display a leader's guide with illustrations that show Jesus doing loving acts. Cover the low table with the white cloth. On a place an offering basket and the Bible opened to First John.

Take a moment for yourself. Remember what Jesus has done for you. Say a prayer of thanksgiving.

Guest the children by name as they arrive. Play "Hidden! Pile 'em out!" on the year three cassette. If you have, and invite the children to gather at the worship area. When everyone is seated, pass the offering basket. Remind the children that giving money to help others is one way we show love. Then pray:

Dear God, send your Spirit on us so that we may be ready to follow Jesus' example of love. Amen.

Introduce this time by telling the children that you will be playing a game about having and not having. Tell them to be ready for some surprises because this game doesn't have rules. Instead the group figures out what to do together. Keep in mind that this is a simulation-type game and it will be impossible to predict the outcome. Take care not to single out any children if they are unwilling to share. Instead, have the children look to the group to have them contribute ideas to solve the problem.

As always when using food with the children, serve something suitable for all, so that a child with an allergy or special diet will be included. Pray aloud.

God, thank you for loving us so much. Thank you for sending us Jesus. Thank you for this food. Amen.

Pass out the paper and napkins to all. Say to the children: Please wait until all the stacks are served before you eat.

Distribute the stacks so that one stack of the children gets two, another third get one, and the rest of the children receive none, and no stacks are left in the serving dish. (Keep the extra supply of stacks out of sight.) Say in your own words:

Oh dear, I thought we had enough. (Pause.) What can we do to everyone get some? (Pause for their answers.)

When they have decided how to solve the problem so that everyone has some, thank to me, and 1 John 3:18 about from the leader's guide. Then invite them to eat.

While they are eating, ask the children what it felt like in fact when someone had a double serving of the snack and some had none. Ask:

- What did it feel like to give away part of your snack?
- What did it feel like to have one serving and know that giving it away would mean you would have none?
- How did love and caring happen during this snack time?

If your group had difficulty sharing, ask:

- What did you learn about yourself in this game?

Thank the group for their creativity in showing God's love to one another. Ask for their help in cleaning up after the snack.

Engaging the Word

1 Recall stories of Jesus' love.

Leader's guide

Distribute the leader's guide to the children. Show them the illustrations of Jesus on the leader's guide. Have them look at each one, recall the story of Jesus that it illustrates, and tell the story to one another.

These illustrations show Jesus being baptized (Mark 1:1-11 from Epiphany 1), healing a leper (Mark 1:21-28 from Epiphany 4), and comforting the tables in the Temple to express a call to righteousness (John 13:22-28 from Lent 3). These are stories that were explained earlier in the year or will be explained later. Invite the children to tell the whole group what they have discovered about ways that Jesus helped people or showed his love to others. They may mention these ideas:

- Jesus ate with people whom others rejected.
- Jesus healed people.
- Jesus taught people to love one another.
- Jesus talked to people and listened to them.
- Jesus was a friend.
- Jesus challenged people to follow God's way.

Conclude this experience by saying:

Jesus wants us to learn to love and care about others too. How do you know when people love and care about you? (For example, they are kind and helpful. They listen. They help you learn and grow. They protect you. They try to provide what you need, instead of what you want.) The Bible verse for this lesson invites us to be loving acts.

Have the children perform skits rather than tell about the stories illustrated on the leader's guide. In small groups, have the children create a story that shows loving or helping others and act it out, so in character, for the other children.

Point to and read the title of the lesson on the leader's guide. Help the children find the same word in 1 John 3:18 printed on the leader's guide. Read the verse aloud. Show them the same verse in the Bible. If the children can read the Bible, explain that the language in the leader's guide has been simplified. Say:

These words are part of a letter that a follower of Jesus wrote a long time ago. The letter was written to help others know more about the way God wants us to love. It was so helpful that it is in our Bible today. Let's see what this writer said about love.

Read "Read Love" on the leader's guide aloud. The children can follow along on their leader's guide or older children may wish to volunteer to read parts of the text. Ask them:

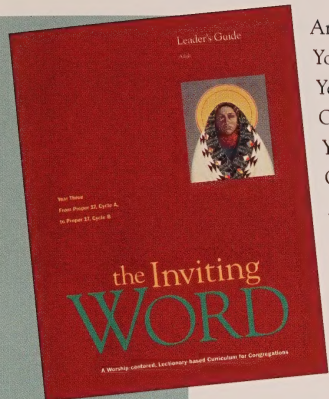
Additional Experiences

Ask our studies of Jesus loving others.

2 Hear 1 John 3:18.

Leader's guide and Bible





Annual leader's guides are available for six age levels:
 Young Children (ages 4–5)
 Younger Elementary Children (ages 6–8)
 Older Elementary Children (ages 9–11)
 Youth (ages 12–14)
 Older Youth (ages 15–18)
 Adults

These teacher-friendly guides provide background helps for preparing a lesson and step-by-step suggestions for conducting a lectionary study group or church school class. By utilizing a liturgy of learning, the movement and flow of education is enhanced as leaders guide learners through the four steps of a session: Gathering for the Word, Engaging the Word, Responding to the Word, and Going with the Word. Church school instructors have been instrumental in making these resources clear, accessible, and easy to use!

8 1/2" x 11", 368 pages, spiral bound, \$19.95

"As a Bible study leader, I find your materials continually **exciting**, **fresh**, inspirational, and insightful. Don't stop! Please continue producing such a **rich resource**. Thank you for all you've done to enliven lectionary study and preaching."

–Jane Ayers,
 pastor, Gatch Memorial United
 Methodist Church, Baltimore, Maryland

Clear, concise directions are given for each step, in outline in the left column, and in detail in the right column.

• What does this writer say and love is like?
 • How does God show love?
 • What do we do to show that we love someone?

Summarize the children's conclusions in your own words. Then remind them:

People who love and care about one another show that love by giving and giving, even when it may not be easy or popular. It may mean making hard choices or sacrifices to show God's love.

Look again at each of the illustrations of Jesus on the learner's guide. Have the children consider these questions:

- What do they think would have been the most difficult thing for Jesus to do as he showed love in each of the situations?
- What hard choices or sacrifices did he make to show that kind of love?
- What was good about what happened because of Jesus' actions?

Responding to the Word

1. Look at a picture of love.
 Learner's guide and, if possible, *Inviting the Word: An Arts and Lectionary Resource*, volume 3.

Ask the children to find on their learner's guide the illustration by Maurice Sendak. Say:

- Let's make up a story about this picture. What will the story be about?
- What are the people doing in this picture?

Listen to the children's ideas about what might be happening in the picture. Make sure the children know what the signs in the picture say. Encourage their thoughts, ideas or no "right" answers. Ask:

- How can our story include showing God's love?

Additional Experiences

Draw loving actions.
 Crayons and a length of mural paper.

2. Decorate a giving bag.
 Paper grocery bag for each child, drawing paper, scissors, crayons, staples, and learner's guide.

Additional Experiences

Choose a helping project.
 Information about two or three helping projects and descriptions to send to families.

Going with the Word

1. Share bread.
 Loaf of unleavened bread or roll and soap.

Gather the group around the worship table and recall the made-up story of sharing bread with the hungry child in the illustration by Maurice Sendak. Hold the bread and say:

Today we explored ways God's love is known and shared. Let's celebrate by passing bread to one another. As you hold the bread, use all a piece for yourself and give the bread to the next person and say, "Because I love, I give." As you eat the bread you can remember that giving is a way of showing God's love.

2. Pray together.

Close by having the children repeat each line of this prayer after you:

Loving God, thank you for loving us.
 Jesus showed us what love.
 Help us to love one another.
 Help us to love through the things we do.
 Amen.

3. Send the children forth.

Learner's guide and sharing bag.

Make sure the children have learner's guides and sharing bags to take home. Send each one with this benediction:

Jesus, remember to love others the way Jesus loves us.

Celebrating the Word with All Ages

See in Season: A Magazine for Lectionary-based Curriculum for the Whole Congregation for ideas for opening and closing worship for Easter 4 that include the creative categories.

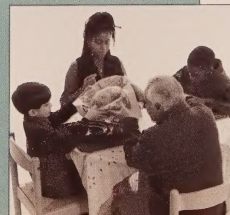
Planning Ahead

What loving or caring actions did you see children do today? What from their conversation might you assume about their knowledge of the names of Jesus?

For Easter 5, prepare the apple tree poems and for remainder only for experience 8. Rehearse the story to go with the remainder song.

Prayers, poetry, and guided meditations to be read by the leader are highlighted in color.

"Planning Ahead" offers brief evaluation questions and suggested preparations for the next session(s).





The Inviting Word—Learner's Guides

"It is wonderful to **experience**

The Inviting Word with preschoolers.

Our classroom is filled with an

energy and **excitement** to learn

and share God's words."

—Gina Huber-Smith,
teacher, First Congregational UCC,
Jefferson, Ohio

"In our search for curriculum

materials for **young adults** and

college/university students, there

has been no resource appropriate

until the release of the adult version

of *The Inviting Word*. It thoroughly

embodies our educational values

in offering an **experiential**

approach to Scripture in the context

of culture, liturgy, and community."

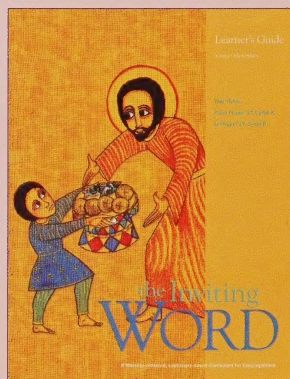
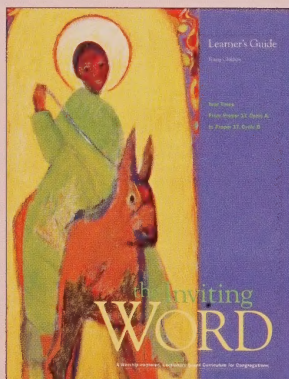
—Thomas K. Chu,
presiding bishop's staff officer for young
adult and higher education ministries,
Episcopal Church Center,
New York, New York

The learner's materials correspond to the same age levels as the leader's guides and contain weekly tear-out resource sheets for use in age-level groups as well as at home. These guides help children, youth, and adults discover and remember the focus scripture. Especially designed for each age level, the guides provide poetry, prayers, music, experiences, and helpful commentary. 8 1/2" x 11", 120 pages (with tear-out sheets), \$9.95

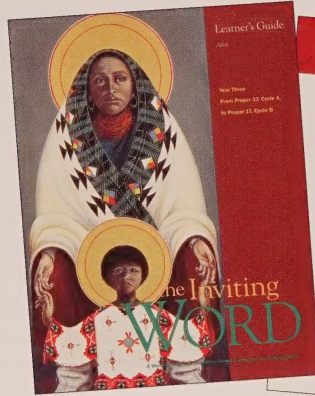
Young Children



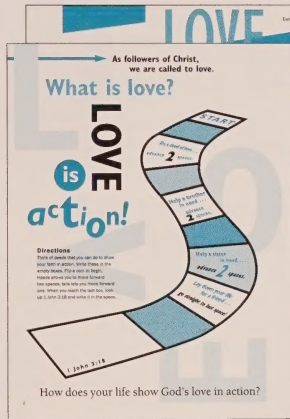
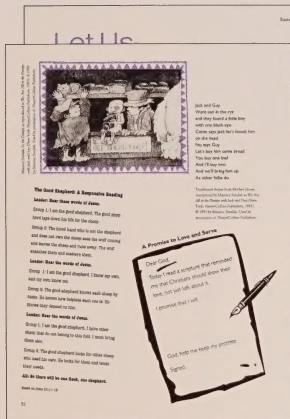
Younger Elementary



Adult

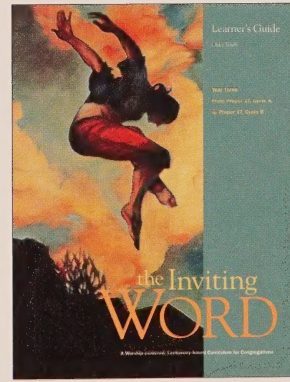
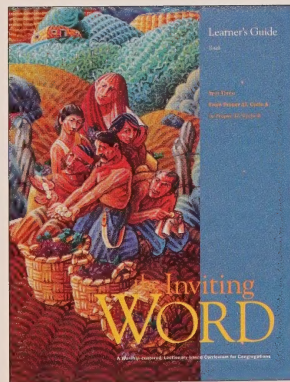
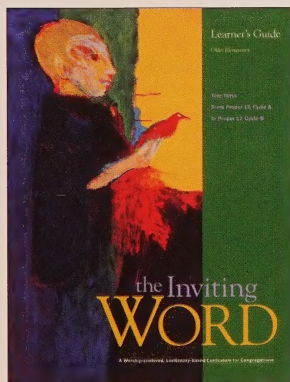


Older Elementary



Youth

Older Youth





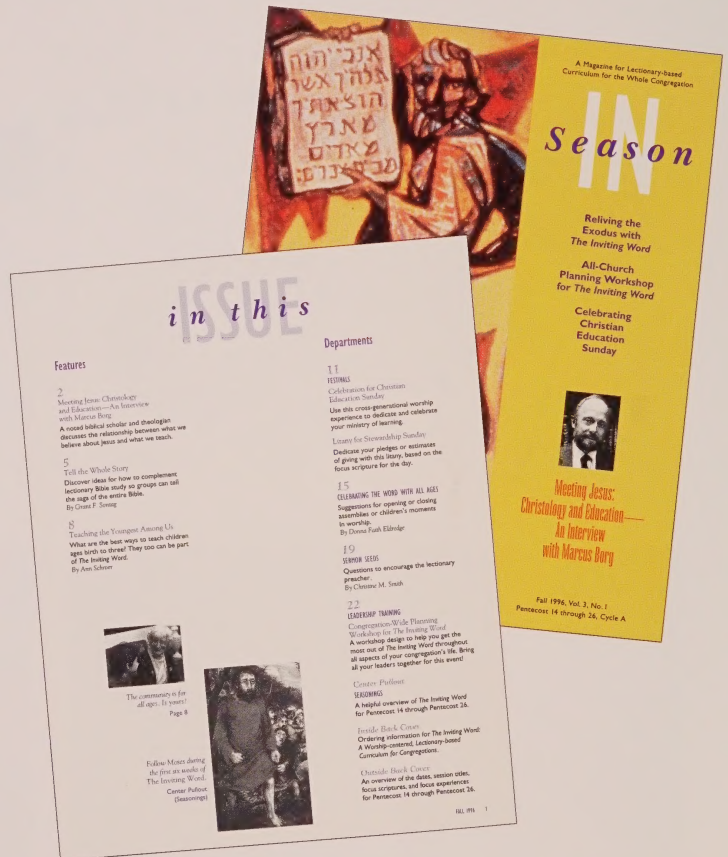
In Season A Magazine for Lectionary-based Curriculum for the Whole Congregation

"I cannot overstate my
enthusiasm for the materials. It is
abundantly clear that you have
taken the time to study and under-
stand how **local churches** actual-
ly function, and then you have taken
the additional effort to come up
with materials which are unique,
challenging, and beautiful."

—Emily Click,
pastor, Diamond Bar Congregational
Church, UCC, Diamond Bar, California

Issued four times a year, this resource has timely articles suggesting further ways to enrich congregational life through a focus on the lectionary and the use of *The Inviting Word*. It provides Bible and sermon helps for pastors and in-depth interviews with theologians, and gives creative ideas for outreach projects. Plan for your entire church's ministry with "Seasonings"—a listing of what goes on each week in *The Inviting Word*. Written for leaders, clergy, and educational staff, this is an invaluable resource for planning and work.

Issued quarterly, 8 1/2" X 11", 24 pages, \$15.00 annually



transform

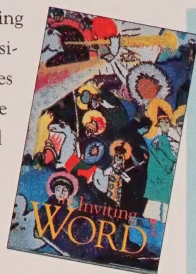


The Inviting Word—Audiocassette



The sixty-minute cassette contains an exciting and diverse collection of musical and nonmusical resources that enhance worship services and age-specific group settings. The cassette provides music to meditate on, sing with, and imagine with—great for all ages! Features a number of songs sung by children and youth!

Audiocassette, \$9.95



Adir Hu (God of Might, God of Right)

A traditional Hebrew melody for Passover.

Crashing Waters at Creation

A hymn to celebrate God's deliverance through water.

As the Grains of Wheat

Music for use with Bible passages about bread or communion.

Thuma Mina (Send Me Now)

South African song to close worship and study.

You Are Mine

A contemporary Christian love song.

J. S. Bach Cantata 140, IV: Chorale

(Zion Hears the Watchers Singing)
The classic Advent cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Keep Awake, Be Always Ready

An Advent hymn based on Bach's cantata.

Song of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis)

The words of the prophet Simeon set to music.

What Ruler Wades through Murky Streams

A hymn to celebrate the baptism of Jesus.

To the Drums, David Danced (Samba BAITU-cada)

Original samba drumming for dance and praise.

Psalms 30

A psalm antiphon for the entire congregation.

God of the Sparrow God of the Whale

A beautiful hymn that celebrates the praise of God by all creatures.

Nada te turbe (Nothing Can Trouble)

A prayer song to be sung over and over.

Jazz for the Last Days in Jerusalem:

A Medley

A jazz interpretation of "All Glory, Laud, and Honor," "Let Us Break Bread Together," "Go to Dark Gethsemane," and "Were You There?"

Come on Children, Let's Sing

A spiritual as originally recorded by Mahalia Jackson.

Veni Creator Spiritus

(Come, O Creator Spirit, Come)
The classical chant for Pentecost.

Soplo de Dios viviente

(Breath of the Living God)
A beautiful Spanish hymn of the Spirit.

Haleluya! Pelo tsa rona

(Halleluya! We Sing Your Praises)
Voices and drums shout God's praise in this traditional South African hymn.

We Are Your People

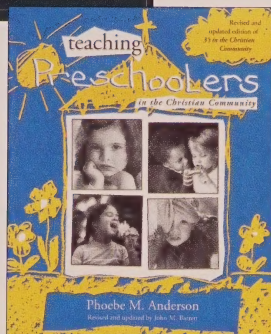
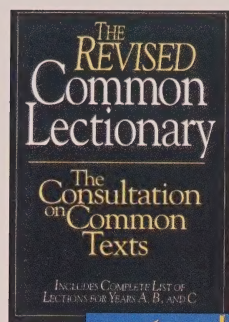
The whole congregation sings about its calling to be God's people.

"The difference *The Inviting Word* has made in my classes has been remarkable. The curriculum is culturally wonderful, and has provided an **openness** to other **cultures** that is stimulating and fun. The audiocassette provides **music** that truly inspires **participation** in the classes and stimulates questions concerning different cultures. The youth love to sing along with the music."

—Kristina Horn,
director of youth and university
ministries, St. Paul United Methodist
Church, Abilene, Texas



Audiocassette



REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY

An invaluable resource to accompany *The Inviting Word*. The *Revised Common Lectionary* contains the complete listings for years A, B, and C to guide preaching, worship planning, and Bible reading throughout the church year. The volume contains information on the history and nature of lectionaries as well as comprehensive indexes including readings listed by books of the Bible.

\$12.95

The following resources are compatible with *The Inviting Word* and are designed for children from birth to age 5.

TEACHING PRESCHOOLERS IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Phoebe Anderson, ed. John Barrett

This revision of the classic *3's in the Christian Community* is concerned with the nature of preschool children and how they grow toward Christian maturity. Offers teaching plans for this often neglected age level.

\$19.95

"LOOK, LISTEN, AND LEARN" RESOURCE KIT

This resource contains exciting songs, Bible verses, poster, photos, art, and other play activities for children from birth to age 2.

\$19.95

"LOOK AND LEARN" RESOURCE KIT

Contains song sheets, Bible verses and story pictures, and other activity cards for children ages 2-5.

\$19.95

"PLAY AND LEARN" RESOURCE KIT

Features Bible puppets, flannelgraph characters and scenes, and cut-out figures to use throughout the church year. This resource is ideal for young children.

\$34.95

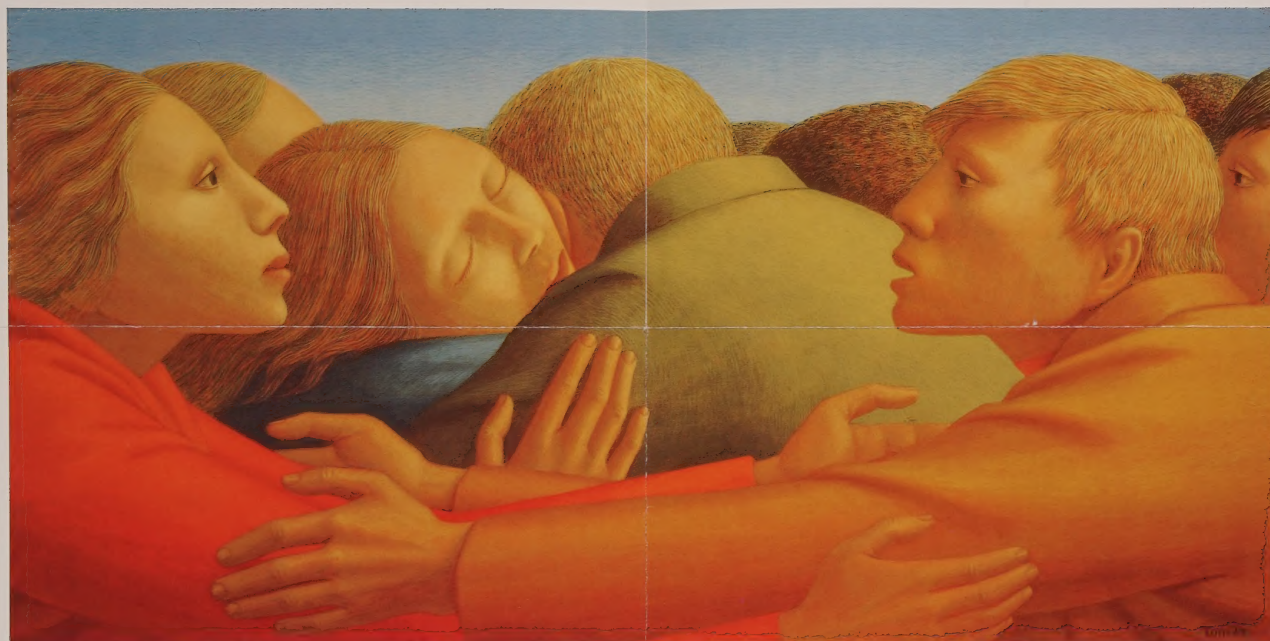


Embrace

iving God,
 Speak your inviting Word. Embrace us.
 Draw us together as we seek your way in the world.
 Challenged, fed, and forgiven, send us to serve
 in Christ's name. Amen.



Top: Wassily Kandinsky,
Allerheiligen (All Saints),
 detail, Städtische Galerie im
 Lenbachhaus, Munich,
 Germany. Used by permission.



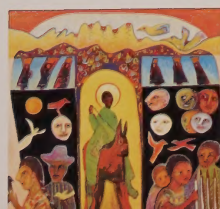
George Tooker, *Embrace of Peace*, 1968, Hartland, Vt.
 Used by permission of the artist.

We are children, youth, adults who
 embrace, study, serve, worship, risk, and rejoice.

Invited by your Word,
 we are your people—the church.

Bottom left: Betty LaDuke,
Guatemala: Procession,
 detail, Ashland, Ore. Used
 by permission of the artist.

Bottom right: Alemayehu
 Biameh, Scene X of *The
 Miserer "Hunger Cloth"*
 from Ethiopia, detail,
 Misereor Medienproduktion
 und Vertriebsgesellschaft
 mbH, Aachen, Germany.
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For information about *The Inviting Word*,
 a comprehensive curriculum for worship and education,
 call United Church Press at 1.800.537.3394.

Paul Koli, *The Burning Bush*, detail, as reproduced in *The Bible Through Asian Eyes* (Auckland, New Zealand: Pace Publishing in association with the Asian Christian Art Association, 1991), 41. Used by permission of the Asian Christian Art Association.



1996-1997

Overview of Year Three (Cycles a/B)

LESSON TITLE FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Proper 17 MOSES, MOSESI Exodus 3:1-15
[Pentecost 14] (God calls to Moses from the burning bush.)
September 1, 1996

Proper 18 FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM Exodus 12:1-14
[Pentecost 15] (Jesus instructs Israel in the festival of Passover.)
September 8, 1996

Proper 19 THROUGH THE SEA Exodus 14:19-31
[Pentecost 16] (God leads Israel across the Red Sea.)
September 15, 1996

Proper 20 RAIN DOWN BREAD Exodus 16:2-15
[Pentecost 17] (God provides Israel with food in the wilderness.)
September 22, 1996

Proper 21 TELL THE GLORIOUS DEEDS Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
[Pentecost 18] (The psalmist recounts God's history with Israel.)
September 29, 1996

Proper 22 YOU SHALL Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
[Pentecost 19] (God gives Israel the Ten Commandments.)
October 6, 1996

Proper 23 MANY CALLED, FEW CHOSEN Matthew 22:1-14
[Pentecost 20] (Jesus tells the parable of the unworthy wedding guests.)
October 13, 1996

Proper 24 BELONGING TO GOD Matthew 22:15-22
[Pentecost 21] (Jesus says to give Caesar what is Caesar's and God what is God's.)
October 20, 1996

Proper 25 AT HOME WITH GOD Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17
[Pentecost 22] (The psalmist praises God, the eternal dwelling place.)
October 27, 1996

Proper 26 FROM TABLE TO TOWN Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37
[Pentecost 23] (The psalmist gives thanks for God's care and bounty.)
November 3, 1996

Proper 27 CHOOSE THIS DAY Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25
[Pentecost 24] (Joshua calls on Israel to declare loyalty to God.)
November 10, 1996

Proper 28 ACCORDING TO ABILITY Matthew 25:14-30
[Pentecost 25] (Jesus tells the parable of the talents.)
November 17, 1996

Proper 29 THE LEAST OF THESE Matthew 25:31-46
[Reign of Christ] (Jesus tells the parable of the great judgment.)
November 24, 1996

Advent 1 KEEP AWAKE Mark 13:24-37
December 1, 1996 (Jesus warns followers to be alert to the signs of God.)

Advent 2 GET READY Mark 1:1-8
December 8, 1996 (John the Baptizer calls the people to repent.)

Advent 3 GOOD NEWS COMING Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
December 15, 1996 (God's prophet brings good news to the exiled and oppressed.)

Advent 4 GREETINGS, FAVORED ONE! Luke 1:26-38
December 22, 1996 (Mary hears she will bear a child and name him Jesus.)

Christmas 1 THE WISE ONES Luke 2:22-40
December 29, 1996 (Simeon and Anna recognize the child Jesus as the Savior.)

Christmas 2 CHILD, FULL OF GRACE John 1:1-9, 10-18
January 5, 1997 (Jesus is God's Word made flesh.)

Baptism of Jesus YOU ARE MY BELOVED Mark 1:4-11
[Epiphany 1] (Jesus is baptized by John.)
January 12, 1997

Epiphany 2 HERE I AM! 1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)
January 19, 1997 (God calls the child Samuel.)

Epiphany 3 THE WORD TO JONAH Jonah 3:1-5, 10
January 26, 1997 (God calls Jonah to preach to Nineveh.)

Epiphany 4 A NEW TEACHING Mark 1:21-28
February 2, 1997 (Jesus teaches and heals with authority.)

Transfiguration Sunday UPON A HIGH MOUNTAIN Mark 9:2-9
February 9, 1997 (Jesus is transfigured in heavenly glory.)

Lent 1 RAINBOW PROMISE Genesis 9:8-17
February 16, 1997 (God establishes a covenant with Noah and creation.)

Lent 2 AN EVERLASTING COVENANT Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
February 23, 1997 (God establishes a new covenant through Abraham and Sarah.)

LESSON TITLE FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Lent 3 OVERTURN THE TABLES John 2:13-22
March 2, 1997 (Jesus chases the money changers out of the Temple.)

Lent 4 GOD SO LOVED John 3:14-21
March 9, 1997 (Jesus tells of God's saving love.)

Lent 5 THE LAW WITHIN Jeremiah 31:31-34
March 16, 1997 (God desires a new covenant written on the people's hearts.)

Palm/Passion Sunday JERUSALEM Mark 11:1-11
March 23, 1997 (Jesus enters Jerusalem.)

Easter JESUS IS RISEN! Mark 16:1-8
March 30, 1997 (The women flee in fear from the tomb after hearing that Jesus is risen.)

Easter 2 OF ONE HEART AND SOUL Acts 4:32-35
April 6, 1997 (The early Christians share their goods.)

Easter 3 YOU ARE WITNESSES Luke 24:36b-48
April 13, 1997 (The risen Christ commissions the disciples.)

Easter 4 LET US LOVE 1 John 3:16-24
April 20, 1997 (Followers of Jesus are called to show love in truth and action.)

Easter 5 ABIDE IN ME John 15:1-8
April 27, 1997 (Believers are related to Jesus as branches are to a vine.)

Easter 6 SING A NEW SONG Psalm 98
May 4, 1997 (The psalmist calls worshipers to praise God with song.)

Easter 7 THAT THEY MAY BE ONE John 17:6-19
May 11, 1997 (Jesus prays for the disciples.)

Pentecost Sunday SPIRIT OF COMFORT Romans 8:22-27
May 18, 1997 (God's Spirit provides hope and comfort for believers.)

Trinity Sunday HOLY, HOLY, HOLY Isaiah 6:1-8
[Pentecost 1] (The enthroned God calls Isaiah.)
May 25, 1997

Proper 4 ON THE SABBATH? Mark 2:23-3:6
[Pentecost 2] (Jesus interprets what is lawful on the Sabbath.)
June 1, 1997

Proper 5 THE ETERNAL 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1
[Pentecost 3] (Paul assures believers of eternal life.)
June 8, 1997

Proper 6 LIVE BY FAITH 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, (11-13), 14-17
[Pentecost 4] (The cross shows Christ's love for all.)
June 15, 1997

Proper 7 DAVID AND GOLIATH 1 Samuel 17:1a, 4-11, 19-23), 32-49
[Pentecost 5] (Young David battles the giant Goliath.)
June 22, 1997

Proper 8 GENEROUS ACTS 2 Corinthians 8:7-15
[Pentecost 6] (Paul encourages the collection for the Jerusalem church.)
June 29, 1997

Proper 9 SENT BY JESUS Mark 6:1-13
[Pentecost 7] (Jesus teaches in Nazareth and sends out the disciples to heal.)
July 6, 1997

Proper 10 DANCE BEFORE GOD 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19
[Pentecost 8] (David dances with joy when the ark comes to Jerusalem.)
July 13, 1997

Proper 11 IN ONE BODY Ephesians 2:11-22
[Pentecost 9] (Through Christ walls that divide can be broken down.)
July 20, 1997

Proper 12 FIVE THOUSAND FED John 6:1-21
[Pentecost 10] (Jesus feeds the multitude with five loaves and two fish.)
July 27, 1997

Proper 13 GROWING IN CHRIST Ephesians 4:1-16
[Pentecost 11] (Unity is a gift of Christ.)
August 3, 1997

Proper 14 TOUCH OF AN ANGEL 1 Kings 19:4-8
[Pentecost 12] (An angel of God revives Elijah.)
August 10, 1997

Proper 15 SEEKING GOD'S PURPOSE 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14
[Pentecost 13] (Solomon prays for wisdom.)
August 17, 1997

Proper 16 THE DWELLING PLACE 1 Kings 8:1, 6, 10-11), 22-30, 41-43
[Pentecost 14] (Solomon prays at the dedication of the Temple.)
August 24, 1997

Proper 17 DOERS OF THE WORD James 1:17-27
[Pentecost 15] (Believers act on the message they hear.)
August 31, 1997



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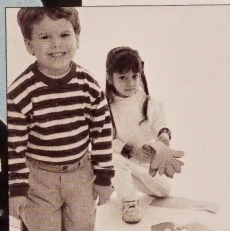
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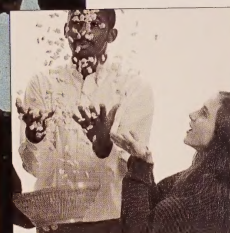
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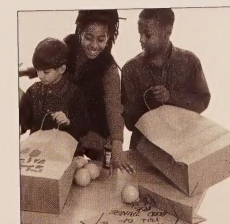
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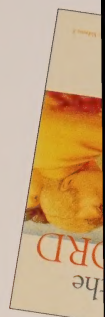
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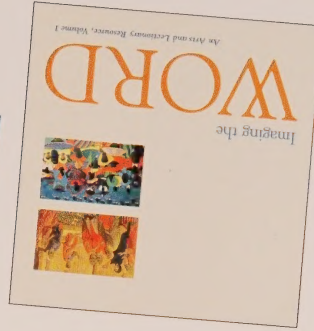


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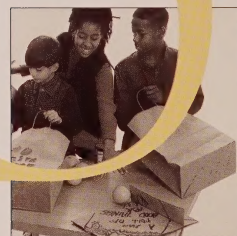
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